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## **Memorandum on Academic Training and Research in Career Guidance and Counselling**

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# MEMORANDUM ON ACADEMIC TRAINING AND RESEARCH IN CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Bratislava, the 30th of May 2015<sup>1</sup>

NICE calls upon all scholars and representatives of higher education institutions, all practitioners, associations and policy makers working in the field of career guidance and counselling to contribute actively to three fields of action for the future development of career guidance and counselling in Europe.

## HIGH QUALITY COMPETENCE-BASED ACADEMIC TRAINING

The practice of career guidance and counselling requires substantial training, combining theory, practice and research. To attract motivated students to train as career practitioners, requirements need to be matched to what we want to offer in terms of high quality academic training. In turn, this opens up good career prospects for practitioners. Furthermore, career practitioners need to be supported in their efforts for further professional development through adequate offers and resources.

To promote the quality of academic training in career guidance and counselling, NICE provides common reference points for all types of training for career practitioners. We aim to establish European competence standards to support the academic training of career practitioners, the mutual recognition of relevant degrees, and the quality assurance of career guidance and counselling programmes, mirroring the current challenges in societies, labour-market needs and the latest knowledge from different academic disciplines that underpin career guidance and counselling.

Competence-based training programmes are needed as learning opportunities for (future) practitioners to develop knowledge and skills, but also more general competences, values and attitudes in the role of active learners. To this end, training programmes need to be based on coherent concepts that integrate the acquisition of research-based knowledge with practical

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1 The NICE Memorandum was endorsed by the members of NICE at the sixth NICE Conference in Bratislava. The members of the steering committee and the network coordinators edited the text (in alphabetical order): Jean-Pierre Dauwalder, Bernd-Joachim Ertelt, Andreas Frey, Johannes Katsarov, Laura Nota, Hazel Reid, Christiane Schiersmann, Salvatore Soresi, Rie Thomsen, Raimo Vuorinen and Peter Weber. Facilitated by Peter Weber, all NICE partners were involved in the process of writing the memorandum, and 200 stakeholders had the opportunity to discuss the first version at the Canterbury Summit (09/2014).

training through innovative teaching and learning methods. Sufficient time and resources are prerequisites for this type of high-quality training for learners and teachers alike.

In line with the relevant UN declarations, training programmes in career guidance and counselling should promote the inclusion of all citizens to participate fully in society, education and work.

To strengthen the scientific basis of training, universities offering study programmes in career guidance and counselling should aim to establish a chair for career guidance and counselling.

Cross-border mobility should be an integral part of such training programmes in order to facilitate new cultural perspectives and the acquisition of innovative approaches for academic staff, students, practitioners and scholars.

## **INNOVATIVE RESEARCH AND EXCELLENT DOCTORAL TRAINING**

To live up to its full potential, research in career guidance and counselling needs to increase its scope, enabling career guidance and counselling to be acknowledged as a distinct discipline. As an emerging discipline, research in career guidance and counselling needs to draw from the knowledge of various established disciplines, following an interdisciplinary approach. Correspondingly, established disciplines need to be informed about innovative perspectives, which arise through dedicated research on career guidance and counselling.

To achieve substantial progress in our research, we propose to form and foster lively research clusters through which we exchange appropriate research methodologies for career guidance and counselling, and develop and test new and effective models for career guidance and counselling.

Towards this objective, actual research needs and themes related to career guidance and counselling ought to be described in a broad interdisciplinary research agenda. A jointly developed research agenda, informed by issues relevant from the view of practitioners, policy and research will enable researchers to provide accessible, effective and high quality input for practice. We call upon the scientific community in our field to establish and develop further scientific formats of knowledge and information sharing.

To achieve sustainable progress in research and to enhance practice in our field, we need to ensure high quality doctoral training specialised on career guidance and counselling supporting novice scholars, especially through collaboration across higher education institutions from different countries and disciplines.

## **JOINT VENTURES OF RESEARCH, PRACTICE AND POLICY**

We invite all actors involved in career guidance and counselling, practitioners, service users, policy makers, professional associations, research and training organisations to engage in intensive collaboration and exchange.

To improve the quality of career guidance and counselling and to make its potential more visible, we call for concrete actions: The practices and policies related to career guidance and counselling can be informed by evidence from research and vice versa. Such a research-based practice needs to be matched by practice-oriented research.

We strive to engage practice in research by involving practitioners, users and organisations as co-researchers in the research processes, including the definition of research questions. All scholars in our field are asked to engage in a strong and positive contact with the community of practice, organisations and networks. In particular, we will seek to establish opportunities for practitioners and groups of citizens to share their knowledge and to feed it into future practice, policy and research.

Last but not least, we will promote the professionalization of career guidance and counselling through high quality academic training, innovative research and active collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, especially those who represent vulnerable and marginalised groups.

We view the relationship between theory, research, policy and practice as central in the development of effective career guidance and counselling.

To achieve these goals, sustained international collaboration and exchange of research and training institutions is needed.